

ENGLISH NOTES

POPULAR CROSSES

CASUAL observers would be mistaken should they assume that the Cross English Tests have a common origin with the Cross Word Puzzle. Yet a similar popularity will probably not surprise the World Book Company, publishers of the Cross English Tests.

Dean E. A. Cross, of the State Teachers College, Greeley, Colorado, has prepared three similar tests of equal difficulty, the purpose of which is to measure accurately the ability of high school and freshman college students in respect of their English habits. Each test includes exercises testing habits of spelling, of pronunciation, of punctuation, ability in sentence recognition, in the use of correct verb and pronoun forms, in the use of idiomatic expressions.

"Its field," says the author in the manual of directions, "is the sentence, the fundamental unit of composition. The author has observed that there are certain key errors. The person who pronounces *then* as if it were spelled *thin*, or says *genuwine* and *labatory*, or writes *fourty* and *seperate*, will probably exhibit all the way through the test similar evidences of crudity or lack of education. In every section of the test the author has drawn upon his extensive observation of what young people say and write, and has selected as far as possible these 'key' errors."

The tests have been in use in their preliminary form for a half-dozen years, and tentative percentile norms are now offered; after users of the test have reported their data to the author, more reliable norms will be made available.

The English teacher has for several years had at his disposal a variety of tests for measuring specific English habits, but here for the first time one finds bound in a single pamphlet a test that can be administered in 45 minutes and scored with rapidity, offering a composite grade on so many distinct abilities and habits.

The price for a package of 25 copies of any form, with manual and key, is \$1.30; or a specimen set will be sent postpaid for 25 cents.

ENGLISH NEWS FROM LYNCHBURG

Debating and public speaking are activities so closely related that in the E. C. Glass High School it has been considered advisable to place both under the same management. In addition to the two literary societies which give programs miscellaneous in nature, two clubs which aim only at training in public speaking have been organized among the students. The Senior Debating Club, which meets every Thursday night, is composed of Juniors and Seniors; the Junior Debating Club, which meets every Monday afternoon, is composed of Freshmen and Sophomores. Membership in the first club totals sixty and in the second, forty. Both membership in a club and attendance at its meetings are entirely voluntary. Instead of making an iron-clad constitution with penalties for absences and provisions for expulsion, those in charge of the club have directed their attention toward making the programs so attractive that members will be unwilling to miss the meetings. This plan has been working successfully during the three months in which the clubs have been functioning.

The making of programs is in the hands of the program committee, which is composed of five members and of the debating coach. At each meeting of the club there is scheduled a regularly prepared debate on some topic of local or national importance. An impromptu debate—frequently humorous in nature—has proved to be an important drawing card insofar as attendance is concerned. Those members of the club who prefer public speaking to debating are given every opportunity to develop in their chosen field. Thus far each student who has been placed on the program for a speech

has been asked to deliver one of his own composition rather than to hold forth on some choice gem of oratory. This plan has the two-fold advantage of causing the speaker to arrange his own thoughts and of providing for him experience very similar to that which he will have later in life.

These are the lines along which debating and public speaking are being managed in Lynchburg this year. The enthusiasm which was manifest at the initial meetings of these clubs has not lessened; interest continues to run high. The debating clubs, now in the midst of a successful season, are giving valuable training in self-expression and are filling a long-felt need in the school.

HOWARD M. REAVES

For the past few terms, instead of having the regular recitation periods on Friday in my English classes of the second, third, and fourth years, I have let them organize into literary societies, with the usual officers: president, vice-president, secretary, and censor. We adopted a constitution and try to proceed in regular parliamentary fashion. Each class is divided into four groups, or committees, to be responsible, in turn, for the Friday's program. The programs have consisted of debates, recitations, story-telling, short plays, read or presented, talks, papers, music on the victrola, etc. Sometimes the programs have been quite creditable, at others, very poor. I feel, however, that the pupils are being trained in assuming responsibility, developing initiative, and in learning to express themselves in a way that is not possible with the regular recitation. It gives them, also, a wholesome insight into the teacher's work and its difficulties. At the end of the period the censor points out any faults of the program, or any especially good features, and, perhaps, makes suggestions for the next week. Some pupil is always asked to write up the program for the school paper. Of course, any pupil who does not take part in the program

is required to hand in to the teacher a written composition.

HELEN H. NELSON

STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Some West Virginia schools are achieving results quite worth while in the publication of pupils' writings from the English classes. *The Amateur Reporter*, a monthly, issued by the Central Junior High School of Charleston, bears evidence of the individuality of the boys and girls themselves. Although these papers have been edited, they appear not to have been tampered with too much.

The same is noticeable in the publications from the West Virginia schools for the deaf, dumb, and blind, at Romney.

Some rural schools of our own state where separate periodicals have not been feasible have found the county paper quite willing to grant space for their best written products when these could be counted on with regularity.

MIMEOGRAPHED NEWSPAPER

At the Handley High School in Winchester a plan has been hit upon for issuance of the school newspaper in mimeographed form. Every other week *The Trail Blazer* appears as an eight to ten-page stapled booklet; the same cover is used in successive numbers, but the reading matter is always new. All the advertisements appear on the inside and back of the cover except those of the local movie house, which requires a change of copy each issue.

The mimeographed pages are of standard typewriter paper size, and the reading matter is arranged two columns to the page.

GAMES FOR IMPROVING ENGLISH

Professor W. W. Charters, of Carnegie Institute of Technology, and Professor Harry G. Paul, of the University of Illinois, recently compiled a bulletin on "Games

and Other Devices for Improving Pupils' English" which should be of untold assistance to the teacher in the intermediate grades.

Assuming that correct linguistic habits are acquired, not through definitions and classifications, but through practice, the compilers have presented here such language games as, "filled with life and motion, and bristling with the excitement of competition, tend to evoke the pupil's habitual oral responses." But they believe that a good language game is "never 95 per cent game and 5 per cent language."

This bulletin (1923, No. 43) has only recently been published, and is available from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., at 10 cents per copy.

"IF THIS BE TREASON," SAYS YALE
ENGLISH PROFESSOR

I emphatically nominate for the Ignoble prize Edmund Burke's Speech on Conciliation with America. Its sentiments are fine, and did the orator credit; but what a bore it is to read! I cannot tell exactly what a bore it is to read through, for I was never able to finish it. Of all the tedious books forced on children who wish to go to college, this deserves particular execration. Think of the innumerable boys and girls who have been compelled to study this dreary essay, divide it into logical paragraphs and write of its "structure," and of its formal rhetorical qualities! No wonder so many boys run away to sea; it is more fun to con a ship than to con such stuff as this.—WILLIAM LYON PHELPS, in *Scribner's Magazine*.

ROSTER OF ENGLISH TEACHERS

A second installment of the list of Virginia's teachers of English is to be found on pages 49 and 50 of this issue. If you find omissions or errors, will you please notify Miss Anna Johnston, Woodrow Wilson High School, Portsmouth, Virginia?

SCIENCE TEACHING IN THE HIGH SCHOOLS OF VIRGINIA

SO FAR as I know there has been published no study of the extent of science teaching in the high schools of Virginia. To get complete information the following questionnaire was sent to one hundred and fifteen high schools. Forty-eight questionnaires were returned, or 41.5%, on which this report is based.

1. Name of school
 2. Location
 3. What science is taught in How many students in each class?
 - a. First year?
 - b. Second year?
 - c. Third year?
 - d. Fourth year?
 4. How much time is given per week in each year to lecture and to laboratory work?

1st year	2d year	3d year	4th year
a. Lecture			
b. Laboratory			
 5. How many volumes relating to science are there in the school library?
 6. In the following blanks, indicate the estimated value of apparatus used in:

	1st year	2d year	3d year	4th year
A.				
B.				
C.				
- Explanation:*
- A. As general apparatus, that is, given out by teacher as needed by student.
 - B. As individual apparatus, that is, assigned to each student.
 - C. As demonstrational apparatus, that is, used by teacher for demonstrations.
 7. How many full time science teachers are there?
How many part time science teachers are there?
What other subjects are taught by the latter?
 8. How many teachers hold:
 - a. Collegiate Professional Certificates?
 - b. Collegiate Certificates?
 - c. Normal Professional Certificates?
 - d. Special Certificates for High School Subjects?
 9. Approximately, what proportion of time is given to teaching the application of science to everyday life?
 10. Check below the method you customarily use:
 - a. Each period divided: first part discussion, second laboratory, third summary of lessons.
 - b. Lecture one period, laboratory two periods, on different days.